97-84201-27

Hammond, Barbara

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William Lovett, 1800-1877

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London : b The Fabian Society, c 1922.
24 p. ; c 22 cm.

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TECHNICAL MICROFORM DATA

FILM SIZE: 35mm REDUCTION RATIO: 9:1 IMAGE PLACEMENT: IA (IIA) IB IIB

DATE FILMED: 9-30-97 INITIALS: AP

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WILLIAM LOVETT

1800-1877

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WILLIAM LOVETT

1800-1877

By Mrs. L. BARBARA HAMMOND

Biographical Series No. 8. Price Threepence. Published and sold by the Fabian Society at the Fabian Bookshop, 25 Tothill Street, Westminster, S.W. 1. . . . Published May, 1922.

WILLIAM LOVETT

1800-1877

WILLIAM LOVETT was born at Newlyn, a mile from Penzance, in the year 1800. His father, a Yorkshireman, captain of a small trading vessel, was drowned before his birth. His mother, a Cornishwoman, left to her own resources, supported herself, the child, and her own mother by hawking fish and doing various odd jobs in Penzance. As a child Lovett showed no signs of the passion for learning that marked him in later life, for no dame's school in the town could succeed in teaching him to read, though he consented finally to learn his alphabet from his great grandmother, an old lady of 80. Later on he learnt at school "to write tolerably well, and to know a little of arithmetic and the catechism, and this formed the extent of my scholastic acquirements." His mother, an ardent Methodist, was kind and indulgent except where religious duties were concerned. The Sundays of his childhood were long remembered by Lovett with horror—three services at chapel, "the reading of texts, prayers, and portions of Scripture" in between the services filled up the gloomy day. One Sunday when the boy played truant and ran off to play with other boys on the sands he was unlucky enough to sprain his ankle. His mother, concerned for his body, but even more concerned for his immortal soul, pronounced it a judgment on him for breaking the Sabbath, but nevertheless sent for the doctor.

When he was about thirteen Lovett was apprenticed for seven years to learn ropemaking. During his apprenticeship he led a hard life, for his mother made a second and unhappy marriage, and he and his grandmother lived together on the five shillings a week he was paid, helped out by what little she could earn in the fishing season. His work was laborious and involved carrying great weights and, what he minded more, the walking along lonely roads by night, for the terror of his early childhood, the cry, "The press gang is coming," was now succeeded by an overwhelming fear of ghosts and goblins that lasted till London life made him a sceptic. Fond though he was of reading, he had nothing to read except "the Bible, and Prayer and hymn book, and a few religious tracts, together with fragments of an old magazine," and occasionally a nonsensical pamphlet about "giants, spirits, goblins, and supernatural horrors." There was no bookshop in the town and no opportunity for intellectual improvement, but the future writer of manifestoes and

addresses found some scope for his gifts in composing love letters for his young neighbours. His leisure was busily spent in making "gimcracks of every kind," boxes, birdcages, a machine for spinning twine, a turning lathe and so on, and he was allowed to play about and pick things up in the shop of a friendly carpenter, a privilege that ultimately proved of great importance, for at the end of his apprenticeship he found himself, at the age of 20, master of a skilled trade in which there was no work. Chains had begun to supersede ropes, and, except for a few weeks in the winter, there was nothing in Penzance for a ropemaker to do. For one season Lovett tried a fisherman's life; the opening was promising, for he had the offer of succeeding to the fishing business of a great uncle, but he could not overcome his sea-sickness, which attacked him even before he got on board at the mere thought of the "short cross loping waves," and so when the season was over he renounced all thoughts of becoming a fisherman, and obtained work at a neighbouring carpenter's. But the regular apprenticed carpenters of Penzance objected, and he had to leave. In despair of obtaining employment of any kind at home, he determined to try his fortune in London. By making a lady's workbox with secret drawers and a pair of tea caddies he raised about 50s.; another workbox paid for part of his passage money on a small trading steamer, and he found himself in London in 1821, aged twenty-one, with 30s. and some letters of introduction to ropeworks in his pocket.

Early Struggles in London.

In London the prospects of work seemed at first no brighter than in Penzance. The ropeyards needed no hands, and attempts to obtain employment in the company of some carpenters from the country were no more successful. His sailor's dress, as worn by the young men of Penzance, told against him. For weeks he was reduced to a penny loaf a day and a drink at the pump. Then he got one or two odd carpentering jobs, but when these were finished and the money they brought exhausted, the half-starved youth determined, in spite of sea-sickness, to take a situation as ropemaker on board an Indiaman. Before finally engaging himself he went to see his carpenter friend from Penzance, who, after failing in business, had come to London and obtained work in a carpenter's shop in Somers Town. This friend's master, seeing probably a chance of cheap labour, agreed to take Lovett on as well, and for several months employed him making furniture. Though the pay was poor, Lovett managed to provide himself with more conventional clothes and a few tools. Soon, however, the pay ceased altogether, and the master after being sent to the Fleet Prison for debt, and persuading his workmen to finish their work on the understanding that it would be paid for when sold, turned out to be a thorough rogue, and they never received a halfpenny of the six or seven pounds due to each of the three. Lovett was again in low water;

he lived in a damp unhealthy back kitchen and fell seriously ill. When he recovered he tried in vain to earn a living by making and selling small bits of furniture, and when this failed decided to try his luck as a cabinet maker, in which line he had now some experience. He was fortunate enough to be given a job at a small repairing shop, where he met a Scotchman, David Todd by name, "one of the most intelligent, kindhearted, and best disposed men I ever met with." Todd urged Lovett to join the Cabinet Makers' Society, but the Society very naturally rejected him as he had not served the five years required by their rules. Todd then procured him a situation at a small cabinet maker's for twelve months at a guinea a week. Though it was not a Society shop, his fellow workmen threatened to oust him because he had not been apprenticed. Lovett thereupon called a meeting and put his case before them, and they agreed to let him stop on, charging him heavily for help in different parts of the work. Once started as a cabinet maker Lovett succeeded in getting employment at different shops, and after he had served the required five years was admitted a member of the Cabinet Makers' Society, of which he afterwards became President.

Intellectual Development.

When Lovett first came to town he was too much absorbed in attempts to earn his bread to have much leisure or energy for other things, though a fellow lodger, a kind old schoolmaster, helped him during this time by correcting his "provincialisms and bad English," and by advising the study of Lindley Murray's Grammar, a book which became his pocket companion. His first real intellectual awakening came after he was in regular work, when he was introduced by chance to a small society called "The Liberals," composed mostly of working men, who had a circulating library, and met twice a week in Gerrard Street for discussion. Lovett had never officially joined the Methodist connection, though for a short time under the influence of some female preachers he had become a "converted member" of an obscure sect called the Bryanites; but when he came to London he still thought that impromptu speaking, which he had never heard except in the pulpit, was a "kind of inspiration from God." To his astonishment, at the meetings of "The Liberals" he found the members making speeches, and good speeches, about the soul. He was at once fired by the desire to defend Christianity, and, with the help of David Todd, became a member of the society in order to study for this purpose. Political questions were also discussed at the meetings and roused his interest. "In short, my mind seemed to be awakened to a new mental existence; new feelings, hopes and aspirations sprang up within me, and every spare moment was devoted to the acquisition of some kind of useful knowledge. I now joined several other associations in its pursuit, and for a number of years seldom took a meal without a book of

some description beside me." The youth who had often wondered in vain in Cornwall about "the causes of day and night, the seasons and the common phenomena of nature," joined the Mechanics' Institute, and was soon discussing scientific theories. On other evenings he would attend the debates in coffee houses and listen to the heroes of past campaigns, such as Gale Jones and Richard Carlile. The vicissitudes of his love affair with his future wife stimulated his intellectual pursuits. She was a lady's maid, and he first saw her in Marylebone Church. He managed to make her acquaintance, and all went well till she asked him to take the sacrament with her. Lovett, whose religious views had been considerably affected by a year or two of London, explained that this was impossible for him. She then decided that she could not marry him and they parted, she returning with her mistress to the continent, he endeavouring to drown his grief in associations "literary, scientific, political." "And this means," he wrote later, "of diverting the mind from the object that preys upon it, I would venture to recommend to all those who may experience a similar heartrending disappointment." He resigned himself to a bachelor's life, but unnecessarily, for a year later the young lady relented, and after some "controversial correspondence" on the subject of the sacrament they were married on June 3, 1826, the various associations were given up, and for a time Lovett led a purely domestic life, devoting himself to his wife and interesting her in all his pursuits. He was firmly convinced that much of the unhappiness and failure of working class life came from the men's habit of expecting their women to be on a lower level of intelligence and omitting to share their intellectual interests with them. In his own case the opposite policy brought great happiness. "My wife's appreciation," he wrote later, "of my humble exertions has ever been the chief hope to cheer, and best aid to sustain me." All through his long life he retained the enthusiastic feminism of his early days. In 1856 he published a poem, written in 1842, called "Woman's Mission," of which the sentiments, though not perhaps the verse, are admirable. One stanza runs :—

> "Would man in lovely woman ever find
> His best adviser, lover, truest friend,
> . . . . . .
> He must at once his gothic laws annul,
> Fling back her dower, strive only for her love,
> And proudly raise her up all rights to share."

Owenism and Politics.

Lovett's studies in London led him to become an ardent Owenite. The accumulation of property in the hands of individuals seemed to him to be the root of all evil: community of property the key to human happiness. Owen and his followers were flooding the world with schemes for the regeneration of mankind. Of one of

these, the first London Co-operative Trading Association, founded during Owen's absence in America, Lovett became storekeeper in 1828. For two years after his marriage in 1826 he had been in good work at his trade; he had then made an unfortunate venture in a pastrycook's business. On getting rid of his business, though not his debts, he accepted the storekeeper's post, at some financial sacrifice, but in the belief that "the gradual accumulation of capital by these means would enable the working classes to form themselves into joint stock associations of labour, by which (with industry, skill, and knowledge) they might ultimately have the trade, manufactures and commerce of the country in their own hands." But so far was the London Trading Association from fulfilling these expectations that it could not even pay Lovett's salary, and in a few months his wife was asked to take his place at half his pay. Lovett went back to his trade with his optimism undaunted, for he became hon. secretary of the British Association for Promoting Co-operative Knowledge. But these various co-operative societies only lasted three or four years, failing, according to Lovett, from want of custom, want of legal security, and from the over-strong meat provided in Owen's Sunday morning lectures, which alarmed "the religious portion of their members."

Lovett's Owenism did not prevent him from being critical of Owen the man and autocrat, or from taking part in Radical campaigns. Amongst these was the "Unstamped Agitation," described by him afterwards as "one of the most important political movements that I was ever associated with." At that time every newspaper was bound by law to have a 4d. stamp on it. Henry Hetherington, the protagonist of the movement, started publication in 1830, in defiance of the law, of an unstamped paper called the *Poor Man's Guardian*. The Stamp Office soon proceeded against the publisher and the booksellers who sold it; volunteers then came forward for the work of distribution, some for love, others for the reward of a stock of papers and £1 a month during imprisonment. A "Victim Fund" was started for the sufferers, and Lovett became secretary of the Committee of Management. The campaign lasted five years. Over 500 persons in different parts of England suffered imprisonment. Hetherington himself when not in prison was "on the run," and his business was nearly ruined. In 1836, in consequence of the agitation, the 4d. stamp was reduced to 1d. Curiously enough, the *Poor Man's Guardian*, over which the battle had been fought, was finally declared by Lord Lyndhurst to be a strictly legal publication.

In the years before the passing of the famous Reform Bill of 1832 there were three schools of opinion amongst advanced working class thinkers about the question of reform. First, there were Owen and his followers, who despised political action, believing that mankind would be saved by other means. Secondly, there was the group of Radicals, who believed that universal suffrage (by which

they meant, as a rule, adult male suffrage), and nothing less than universal suffrage, was the necessary preliminary to all social improvement. This school was joined by many Owenites, who came to believe that democracy must precede communism, and gradually dropped their communistic dreams. Thirdly, there were the Radicals like Francis Place, who believed in taking the Bill as it stood, or with such amendments as were possible, and treating it as an instalment of a larger measure.

Lovett belonged to the second group. His conversion from Owenism to political reform was no doubt hastened by his acquaintance with Henry Hunt, the veteran reformer, whom he first met about 1828. For some years he continued working for the two movements side by side: one day he would be discussing the founding of an incipient community on the plan of Mr. Thompson, of Cork; another day he would be helping to found the Metropolitan Political Union, to obtain effectual and radical reform in the Commons. Not content with these activities, he became "greatly interested in the temperance question," and in 1829 drew up a petition for the opening of the British Museum on Sundays. "Your petitioners," ran the opening sentence, "consider that one of the principal causes of drunkenness and dissipation on the Sabbath is the want of recreation and amusement." All the time, too, he was working at his trade of cabinet making. By 1831 his Radical convictions were so strong that on being drawn for the Militia he refused to serve or to pay for a substitute on the ground that he was unrepresented in Parliament. The authorities seized his little stock of household furniture, which his wife suffered to go "without a murmur"; but the protest had its effect, for discussion on the subject in the House of Commons and fear of an epidemic of "the no-vote no-musket plan" brought the balloting system to an end. Lovett had become a public character.

The Reform Bill.

In 1831 Lovett joined the newly founded National Union of the Working Classes and Others, which, amongst other objects such as "the repeal of all bad laws," aimed at "an effectual reform of the Commons House of Parliament." When the Whig Reform Bill was produced Lovett and Watson drew up a declaration of the principles of the National Union, headed by a quotation from Thales, calling for nothing less than adult male suffrage, voting by ballot, the abolition of property qualification for Members of Parliament, and annual Parliaments, thus comprising four of the six points of the future Charter. The National Union was an active body: besides holding many small meetings for discussion under class leaders, it held public meetings, of which those at the Blackfriars' Rotunda were the most important, and from these meetings its adherents were often called "Rotundanists." It attracted some

violent spirits: "could the violence and folly of the hot-brained few," wrote Lovett later, "have been restrained, a far larger amount of good might have been effected. But, as in almost all associations that I have ever been connected with, our best efforts were more frequently directed to the prevention of evil by persons of this description than in devising every means and in seeking every opportunity for the carrying out of our objects." But whilst Lovett was blaming the "hot-brained few," Place was blaming Lovett and his friends. Place and those who thought with him formed a society called the National Political Union, with the object of supporting the Whigs in carrying their Reform Bill. They were bitterly opposed by the Rotundanists, who objected to being made the "tools" of the middle classes. Both sides tried to mobilise working class opinion. Lovett moved a universal suffrage amendment at the first public meeting of the National Political Union, but it was drowned by the "noise and clamour" of the opposing side, though a later proposal that half the Council should consist of working men was carried. The Rotundanists, however, found themselves pitted against a past master of strategy and intrigue in Place, who managed to secure for the Council the election of "respectable" working men untainted with Rotunda heresy.

Another blow to the Rotundanists was the proclamation of their proposed public meeting to ratify the declaration drawn up by Lovett and Watson. In vain, Lovett, Watson and the secretary waited on Lord Melbourne to assure him of their peaceable intentions. Lord Melbourne, receiving them with a barrier of chairs in front of him and a posse of police in the next room, assured them that their meeting was illegal, and that attendance at it would be high treason. The meeting was abandoned.

It cannot be said that the National Union of the Working Classes, or Rotundanists, were conciliatory in their methods. When the Government ordered a general fast for the cholera in March, 1832, the National Union, on the grounds that the cholera was largely due to underfeeding, decided to celebrate the day by providing a good dinner for their members, to be preceded by an orderly procession through the streets, headed by Lovett, Watson and Hetherington. The police interfered with the procession, using their bludgeons freely, and a few days later Lovett, Watson and the veteran and violent Benbow were arrested and charged with having "made a great riot, tumult and disturbance . . . . and caused great terror and alarm." All three were triumphantly acquitted by the jury, but Lovett and Watson withdrew from the Committee of the National Union as a protest against what they considered Benbow's unscrupulous conduct in connection with the expenses of the trial.

In spite of the efforts of the Rotundanists, the Reform Bill was passed in June, 1832. The National Union of the Working Classes and Others continued to exist for a time, but Lovett took little part in its activities, though a police spy did his best to entrap him into

attending a meeting of whose objects he disapproved. The agitation for the "unstamped press" was absorbing his energies.

The twenties, thirties and forties of last century produced a bewildering procession of organisations and associations. The National Union of the Working Classes and Others was succeeded by the remarkable though short-lived movement known as the Grand National Trades Union of 1833-1834, a movement due largely to the reaction amongst the working classes against political intervention after the Reform Bill, and described by Mr. Hovell as "militant Owenism." The object of the Grand National was to obtain better conditions of life by means of combinations and strikes. Lovett joined it, and tried in vain to make it declare in favour of universal suffrage. By the end of 1834, after a series of unsuccessful strikes, it was dead.

In 1834 Lovett left his trade and made a second venture in business. He opened the premises of one of the defunct Co-operative Stores as a coffee house. Its conversation room and debates were well attended, but its financial side was a failure. After struggling with it for two years at a loss, Lovett gave it up. Opposite the coffee house was a school for poor music boys, opened by Mazzini, with whom Lovett became acquainted.

London Working Men's Association.

It was in the year 1836 that Lovett did the most important work of his life, the founding of the London Working Men's Association. What kind of a man was he at this time? Place, a critical friend, described him as "a tall, thin, rather melancholy man, in ill-health, to which he has long been subject; at times he is somewhat hypochondriacal; his is a spirit misplaced." To his upright character and to his gentleness, all his contemporaries bear witness. Place wrote to Lovett urging him to overcome his melancholy, and to be less troubled by the miseries of mankind. "When youth and strength and flow of spirits," answered Lovett, "have been wasted in unrequited toil and poverty, and when after years of great physical and mental exertions, after a life of sobriety and industry, you find yourself losing your physical energies (so necessary for those who have to depend on their labour), and getting more and more involved in difficulties inextricable, and having the cares of a family in whose welfare is your highest hope, you need not be surprised if my tone and manner correspond with my situation. Perhaps the scenes I have had to encounter in my journey may have increased my sympathies for my fellow men; and while I believe with you that this is the best world of which I have any hope, yet when I feel conscious of how much could be done to make it a comparative paradise of happiness instead of the hell of toil, of poverty and crime we find it, I cannot help lamenting that the wise and intelligent few do not carry their views of reformation beyond making

comfortable slaves of the many to pamper and support the few." Lovett had only one child, a daughter, a second daughter having died in infancy.

Fifteen years experience of London life and political campaigns had brought a certain disillusionment. He no longer pictured his fellow workmen as waiting eagerly for opportunities of study and regeneration. They were more inclined "to croak over their grievances with maudlin brains, and to form and strengthen their appetites for drink amid the fumes of the tap room" than to put Lindley Murray's grammar in their pockets. But their shortcomings were due to the "circumstances and constitution of society, and not to the organisation of man." Salvation, he felt convinced, must come not from above, but from the workers themselves. They must cease to look up to leaders, they must educate themselves. He complained that "a lord, a M.P., or an esquire was a leading requisite to secure a full attendance and attention from them on all public occasions"; this must cease, and they must develop "discrimination and independent spirit in the management of their political affairs." With this object the London Working Men's Association was started. Its membership was confined "as far as practicable" to the working classes: it aimed at mental improvement as well as at equal political and social rights. The ideal of the founders was expressed in an address as follows: "Imagine the honest, sober and reflecting portion of every town and village in the kingdom linked together as a band of brothers, honestly resolved to investigate all subjects connected with their interests, and to prepare their minds to combat with the errors and enemies of society—setting an example of propriety to their neighbours, and enjoying even in poverty a happy home." Political rights were not to be aimed at as an end in themselves; "when we contend for an equality of political rights, it is not in order to lop off an unjust tax or useless pension, or to get a transfer of wealth, power or influence for a party; but to be able to probe our social evils to their source, and to apply effective remedies to prevent, instead of unjust laws to punish."

The London Working Men's Association exercised an influence on public affairs out of all proportion to its membership. Quality, not quantity, was aimed at. Between its foundation in June, 1836, and 1839 only 279 members were admitted, in addition to some 35 honorary members. But missionaries were sent into the country, and a hundred and fifty kindred associations sprang up elsewhere. Lovett, who was secretary of the London Association, found full scope for his passion for drafting addresses and manifestoes. Attention was not confined to domestic affairs, urgent though these might have seemed; the importance of international affairs was fully recognised. The workers of Belgium were sympathised with over the persecution of Jacob Katz; in the course of an exhaustive view of foreign politics the working classes of Europe, and especially the Polish people, were assured that it is "the ignorance of our brethren

which "generates and fosters the despot"; the Canadians were encouraged in their opposition to Whig coercion: "It gives us great pleasure to learn, friends, that you are not so easily scared *by proclamation law*—by the decree of a junta against a whole nation. Surely you know and feel, though Governor Gosford may not, that 'A NATION NEVER CAN REBEL'"; the Americans were congratulated on their republican institutions and on the heights of political liberty to which they had attained, but were asked the searching question, "Why, after sixty years of freedom, have you not progressed further?"

A long address on education, a subject dear to Lovett's heart, contained a scheme of schools of various grades to be provided by public money and managed by local school committees elected by universal suffrage, and ended with an appeal to Christians to rise above sectarian jealousies in the matter of religious education. An address on "The Rotten House of Commons" gave a scathing description of the personnel of the existing House, and urged on working men the duty of demanding equal political and social rights so that they might send working class representatives to Parliament.

The Charter.

But the most important work of the Association was the preparation of the Charter, with its famous six points. At a public meeting at the Crown and Anchor in the Strand, on February 28, 1837, a petition to Parliament was adopted embodying the six points: (1) universal suffrage, (2) the ballot, (3) payment of members, (4) annual Parliaments, (5) equal electoral districts, (6) the abolition of property qualifications for M.P.s

The petition was entrusted to Roebuck for presentation, and he suggested enlisting the support of other Radical M.P.s. A joint meeting of eight members of Parliament and various members of the Working Men's Association accordingly took place. The Radical members of Parliament, fresh from the chilly atmosphere of the House, showed little enthusiasm, and were taken severely to task by Lovett, who charged them with thinking more of their seats than of their principles. O'Connell retorted that Lovett was impracticable. The result of this and of a later meeting was the formation of a committee, consisting of six members of Parliament and six members of the Working Men's Association, to draw up a Bill embodying the six points, to be known as "the People's Charter."

This committee was hardly appointed when William IV. died, Parliament was dissolved, and the members disappeared to their constituencies. The business of drawing up the Bill was in consequence postponed for several months. Lovett's pen was busy in the interval with an Address to Reformers on the elections and with an Address to Victoria on her accession. This latter Address

the Association proposed to present in person by a deputation of six, but they were deterred by the necessity of appearing in Court dress. "With every respect for those forms which make personal cleanliness and respectful behaviour necessary qualifications to approach her Majesty, we have neither the means nor the inclination to indulge in such absurdities as dress swords, coats and wigs," wrote Lovett to Lord John Russell. If Victoria ever read the Address she must have been somewhat bewildered by the exhortation contained in it to distrust alike Whigs and Tories, who "have for many years past succeeded in making Royalty a mere puppet of their will," and to instruct her Ministers to prepare a Bill for universal suffrage.

When Parliament reassembled the committee of twelve appointed Roebuck and Lovett to draw up the proposed Charter. Roebuck was too busy with Canadian affairs to help, so the task fell to Lovett. In such leisure as his trade left him he compiled a rough draft which he then submitted to Place, who suggested alterations. In the first draft of the Bill provision was made for women's suffrage, but it was afterwards decided to omit this on the ground that it would "retard the measure," a decision that Lovett regretted. In a composite document the question of authorship is a nice one, and both Place and Lovett afterwards claimed to have composed the Charter. Place's were not the only amendments, and the physical work of writing and rewriting the document several times—no light task—was Lovett's. It was finally published in May, 1838, accompanied by an address composed by Lovett, in which he characteristically dwelt on self-government as a means to "enlightenment." "When a knowledge of their rights and duties shall have taught the people that their own vices and ignorance are the chief instruments by which they are bowed to the dust, titles, privileges and wealth will lose their potency to enslave them."

The Charter itself had nothing simple or popular about it except its name. It was a long and complicated Bill entering into the minutest details about arrangements for registration and elections. Never has so dull a document had such sensational effects. Within twelve months over a million persons had signed a petition in its favour, and the middle classes were quaking at the very name of Chartism.

The Charter was published at a crucial moment, and succeeded in focussing heterogeneous movements of discontent. (1) The Birmingham Political Union, which had done yeoman service for the Reform Bill of 1832, had lately been revived under the leadership of Attwood, described by Disraeli as "a provincial banker labouring under a financial monomania." Attwood's panacea for the ills of society was the creation of unlimited paper money, but he and his followers were ready to press for suffrage reform as a means to this end. The Birmingham Association drew up what came to be known as the National Petition, and the Working Men's

Association agreed to adopt it as the petition for the Charter. It was from the Birmingham Association, too, that the suggestion came of a General Convention of the Industrious Classes, which was to create and extend public opinion in favour of the principles of the People's Charter, and present the monster petition to Parliament. It was decided to hold the General Convention next year, and meanwhile to procure signatures for the Petition.

(2) The agitation in the North in favour of Factory Reform and against the new Poor Law was also all swept into the stream of Chartism. The audiences which had acquired the habit of being lashed into frenzy by Oastler, Stephens, and O'Connor had now a fresh object for excitement and enthusiasm. The Charter was to be the cure for economic evils. "Universal Suffrage," said Stephens, "is a knife and fork question, a bread and cheese question." "Six months after the Charter is passed," declared O'Connor, "every man, woman and child in the country will be well fed, well housed, and well clothed." "The furious appeals to the passions of the multitude"; "the violent ravings about physical force," as Lovett called them, were now transferred to the Chartist campaign. Henceforth, though Lovett and his friends may have launched the boat, the new crew controlled her course. The *Northern Star*, O'Connor's organ, which shrieked out denunciations week after week, was a brilliant success with a huge circulation, "a melancholy tribute," it has been called, "to the low intelligence of its readers." (Hovell, The Chartist Movement). On the other hand, the *Charter*, started in London by the intellectuals of the movement, was a dismal failure and died early, leaving debts behind it.

No two men could have been more antagonistic to each other than Lovett and Fergus O'Connor, who now began to play an important part in the Chartist agitation; O'Connor, the born demagogue with his unscrupulous appeals to the emotions; Lovett, the composer of innumerable addresses directed to the reason of his fellow men. "We are of opinion," wrote Lovett, "that whatever is gained in England by force, by force must be sustained: but whatever springs from knowledge and justice will sustain itself." O'Connor preferred to rouse his audiences by vague threats of "fleshing swords to the hilts," though when opportunity offered he showed no disposition to draw the sword from the scabbard. The two men had already had a bitter encounter over the Committee on the Combination Act, a Parliamentary Committee appointed early in 1838 largely as the result of attacks on Trade Unions by Daniel O'Connell. O'Connor falsely accused Lovett and the Working Men's Association of engineering the appointment of the Committee out of hostility to Trade Unions. In reality, Lovett had been appointed by the Trade Unions to watch over their interests in connection with it. In his answer to O'Connor's attack, he showed that it was not only the Northern demagogues who could use vituperation. "You tell the country," he wrote, "that you

alone have organised the Radicals of London"—and tell the Londoners the wonders your genius has performed in the country. You carry your fame about with you on all occasions to sink all other topics in the shade—you are the great "I AM" of politics, the great personification of Radicalism—Fergus O'Connor."

The Convention.

To avoid prosecution under the infamous Six Acts of 1819, it was necessary to elect the delegates for the proposed Convention at public meetings. These meetings gave ample opportunity for the mob orators of the North to exercise their gifts. At the London meeting the speakers were specially warned by the Working Men's Association, but warned in vain, so far as O'Connor was concerned, to avoid "every abusive or violent expression which may tend to injure our glorious cause." The moderates were already suffering for the ebullitions of the physical force party in the alienation of middle class opinion. "But the meeting of the Convention," wrote Lovett afterwards, "was now fast approaching, and so strong was the hope reposed in that meeting by the Chartist body, that the great majority of them manifested the strongest desire to sacrifice their peculiar feelings and convictions for the sake of union. A few hot-brained enthusiasts, however, were not so patriotic; union was naught with them compared with their own blustering harangues about arming and fighting; these and their daily invectives against everything bearing the resemblance of moderation, preparedness, or intellectual and moral effort, served to create constant irritation in our ranks, and ultimately to cause distrust and disunion."

The Convention met in London on February 4, 1839. It was composed of 53 delegates, a few of whom never sat. It met in an atmosphere of wild hopefulness combined with a certain vagueness as to its objects. Lovett was appointed secretary, a post from which O'Connor, who was not present at the election, tried in vain to oust him. His literary facility and business-like ways made him the obvious choice. As the first business of the Convention was to promote the Petition, missionaries were sent out to procure signatures from districts hitherto untouched. In the meantime the Convention showed an unlimited capacity for discussion of topics like "the suffering in the manufacturing districts," "the new Rural Police Bill," "the factory system." Outside, its supporters grew restive; one association declared "that if the Convention did its duty the Charter would be the law of the land in less than a month." Inside, O'Connor and his party became so violent in their language and methods that in March the Birmingham delegates and others of the moderate party seceded from the Convention. By May 6 the great National Petition was ready to be taken to Attwood for presentation to Parliament. It contained 1,283,000 signatures, was nearly three miles long, and was escorted to his house by the members of the Convention, marching two by two.

The presentation of the Petition was postponed by the dissolution of Parliament, and meanwhile the Convention on May 13th moved to Birmingham, in hopes of securing immunity from arrest and more sympathetic surroundings. The question of what was to be done if Parliament rejected the Petition became acute, for rejection seemed only too probable. Discussion of this question produced the famous "Manifesto of Ulterior Measures," drawn up by Lovett from notes of the conclusions arrived at in an unofficial meeting of delegates, and formally ratified by the Convention after they reached Birmingham. The manifesto contains probably the most violent language that Lovett ever penned. "I believe that I did an act of folly in being a party to some of its provisions," he wrote in later life. Ignorance of the world outside London and close association with men who claimed to speak for multitudes ready to rise seem to have made him for a time almost a convert to physical force. At any rate, he pressed for the adoption of the manifesto on the grounds that the Convention ought to give a lead to its followers. (Hovell, p. 149.) "Shall it be said, fellow-countrymen," runs the manifesto, "that four millions of men, capable of bearing arms, and defending their country against every foreign assailant, allowed a few domestic oppressors to enslave and degrade them?" "We solemnly believe that the Radical Reformers are the only restraining power that prevents the execution of an outraged people's vengeance." "We have resolved to obtain our rights, 'peaceably if we may, forcibly if we must'; but woe to those who begin the warfare with the millions, or who forcibly restrain their peaceful agitation for justice—at one signal they will be enlightened to their error, and in one brief contest their power will be destroyed." After these threats the methods suggested for enforcing the people's will read rather like an anti-climax. "Simultaneous public meetings" are to be asked if they are prepared (1) to draw out their money from the banks, (2) to convert their paper money into gold, (3) to give effect to the proposed "sacred month," that is, to have a general strike and to "go dry" for a month. They are further asked (4) whether "they have prepared themselves with the arms of freemen" according to their old constitutional rights, (5) whether they will provide themselves with Chartist candidates at the next election and treat them as M.P.s if elected by show of hands, and (6) deal exclusively with Chartists, and finally (7 and 8) work for the Charter and obey the Convention.

A few days after adopting the manifesto, the Convention adjourned till July 1st, and the "simultaneous meetings" were held during Whitsuntide. Thanks to the wisdom of General Charles James Napier, who had been put in command of the Northern district, the demonstrations were peaceful. The Convention had tried to leave the decision as to "ulterior measures" to the people, but when it met again it was clear that the "simultaneous meetings" had given

no lead. What was to be done? Were the "arms of freemen" to be used or only kept in the background? How were the workers to be supported during the "sacred month"? Lovett proposed that as a preliminary test one or two trades should be called on to stop work and a fund be raised to support them. Benbow, one of the wilder spirits, talked of "the cattle upon a thousand hills" as the best strike fund. The aim of the Convention was described by a Scottish delegate: "We must shake our oppressors well over hell's mouth, but we must not let them drop in." Whilst plans for the shaking were being discussed, a serious blow was dealt at the Convention by the arrest of Lovett.

During the agitation for the Reform Bill of 1832 Birmingham reformers had been in the habit of meeting in the Bull Ring. When the Chartist agitation began the Bull Ring was again used as a place of meeting. These Chartist meetings were prohibited by the magistrates, some of them ex-reformers of 1832. The Chartists took no notice of the prohibition or of the spasmodic arrests, and continued to meet. The Birmingham authorities thereupon sent for police from London, who proceeded on their arrival to attack a peaceful crowd in the Bull Ring. The crowd, exasperated, tore up the railings from a neighbouring churchyard, and ugly retaliation on the police was only prevented by the intervention of two members of the Convention, Dr. Taylor and Dr. McDouall. Dr. Taylor was arrested by the police. Next morning the Convention received an appeal from some of the frequenters of the Bull Ring. Lovett, whose personal courage never failed, drew up three resolutions condemning the police, which the Convention passed unanimously, ordering them to be placarded throughout the town. The first and strongest resolution declared "that a wanton, flagrant, and unjust outrage has been made upon the people of Birmingham by a bloodthirsty and unconstitutional force from London." "Characteristically enough, Lovett insisted that his own signature alone should be attached, so that the Convention should run no risk. Characteristically enough, the Convention was quite willing to sacrifice him." (Hovell, p. 157.) On July 6th, when the placards appeared, Lovett and Collins, who had taken the draft to the printers, were both arrested.

Lovett and Collins were committed for trial at the next assizes, and though bail was fixed at £1,000 each, the magistrates made great difficulties about their sureties, and detained them in prison for nine days. During those nine days they were subjected to great indignities, which Lovett made the subject of a petition to both Houses of Parliament. Stripping, dirt, infection were among the things complained of, and the House of Lords was moved to merriment by the idea of Lovett's hair being cropped by a common felon, merriment that Brougham very properly rebuked. On the day on which the two prisoners were released on bail, there was another more serious riot in the Bull Ring, the culmination of a succession

of collisions between police and people. Shops were burnt and the military called in, and though Lovett and Collins had nothing to do with the affair, the weapons used by the rioters were produced, to their prejudice, at their trial.

Two days before the riot, on July 12th, the long-expected debate on the Petition had taken place in the House of Commons. Attwood supported by Fielden, proposed that it should be taken into consideration. Forty-six members only voted for him, 235 voted against him. The Petition's parliamentary career was over.

The later history of the Convention, from which Lovett was, of course, absent, is soon told. They reassembled in London, and blew hot and blew cold about "ulterior measures." August 12th was fixed on as the day for beginning the "sacred month," but further enquiries showed that most of the would-be strikers had no work to strike against. The "sacred month" was abandoned, and after some futile recriminations the Convention was dissolved on September 6th, 1839.

A successful popular agitation in England uses physical force as an ally in the background, but is careful not to produce the ally for too close an inspection. The more violent Chartists made the mistake of parading their ally till his weakness was apparent to everyone. The abortive rising in November at Newport, when twenty-eight soldiers successfully routed what was called a Chartist army, was a final proof of the futility of their threats. One after another the leaders had been clapped into prison, and the first Chartist agitation had collapsed.

Trial and Imprisonment.

On August 6th Lovett was tried before Mr. Justice Littledale, at the Warwick Assizes, for publishing a "false, malicious, scandalous and seditious libel" on the police. Four persons had previously been condemned to death for the second Bull Ring riot (the death sentence was afterwards commuted to imprisonment through the exertions of Joseph Sturge), and Collins had been tried and found guilty the day before. Collins was defended by counsel, Sergeant Goulbourne, a Tory, who, to Lovett's disgust, regarded it as "a glorious opportunity of having a slap at the Whigs." Lovett defended himself in an able speech, pleading justification, and appealing to public opinion. The resolutions, he argued, were true and not malicious, they were public censure of a public act. "My lord, it is for directing public attention to a flagrant and unjust attack upon public liberty that I am brought as a criminal before you." His condemnation was a foregone conclusion; two of his jury had been heard to wish that all Chartists were hanged. He and Collins were sentenced to twelve months imprisonment in the county gaol.

During his imprisonment Lovett suffered severely, both physically and mentally. A diet of gruel with blackbeetles in it disgusted him with his food and gastric trouble set in. The society of companions,

one of whom planned the robbery of his own mother and the division of the spoils with a fellow prisoner shortly to be released, whilst another described how he had thrown down a woman and kicked her on the face and eyes, was torture to a sensitive man. The chaplain and the doctor seem to have been caricatures of their type in fiction, the former consigning men to the refractory cell for coughing in chapel, the latter depriving the prisoners of half their scanty allowance of meat because it made the soup too rich. None of the ordinary privileges of political prisoners were granted the two Chartists. Application to the visiting magistrates was referred to the Secretary of State: application to the Secretary of State was referred to the visiting magistrates. It was with the latter that the power really lay, but Lovett and Collins had prejudiced their case by exposing the way in which they had been treated before trial, an exposure which had obliged the magistrates to provide sheets and more hygienic bathing arrangements. Ultimately, though other privileges were withheld, pen, ink, and paper were given to the two prisoners, and Lovett, with the help of Collins, set about writing a book called "Chartism, or a New Organisation of the People." Lovett and Collins were offered the remission of the last three months of their sentence if they would be bound for good behaviour for a year. This they refused to accept, considering it to be an admission of past guilt. By the end of their year the portly Collins had become a thin man, and the thin Lovett a weak emaciated wreck.

Lovett and Collins were released in July, 1840. Lovett was too ill to attend most of the festivities arranged in their honour, and after one public dinner in London set off for Cornwall in hopes of regaining his health. Funds for the journey to Cornwall were provided by friends, who had also supported Lovett's wife and daughter whilst he was in prison. It would be interesting to know whether his Chartism or his scepticism about the supernatural excited more surprise in his native place, where his visit was preceded by that of a ghost, who walked about without a head. After some months of rest he returned to town, and being still too weak to work at his trade, opened a small bookseller's shop in Tottenham Court Road—his third venture in business, and, like the other two, unsuccessful.

Knowledge Chartism.

Lovett's views on policy had undergone some modification after his experiences in the Convention and his imprisonment. Now, as always, an enlightened people was his ideal, and the enactment of the Six Points the means to that end and not an end in itself. But the Six Points seemed more difficult to achieve than in the early days of the Convention, and he began to lay greater stress on a preliminary enlightenment of the people as the means by which the Charter itself would be won. The Charter itself when won would in its turn be the means to "political and social reform."

It was the same idea of education at which the Working Men's Association had aimed, but Lovett had now given up the idea of a purely working class movement, and appealed to "the wise and good" of all classes to unite and to "labour and reason together to work out the social and political regeneration of man." They must "redeem by reason what had been lost by madness and folly," and the middle classes must not stand "apart from the name and principles of the Charter" because of "the intolerant and mischievous conduct" of certain Chartists. The workers, whilst "labouring to obtain the Charter," should be "instructing themselves, so as to realise all its advantages when obtained," and no longer "be engaged, as reformers have heretofore been, in periodically arousing the public mind to the highest state of excitement, suddenly to sink into apathy, *with* or *without* the attainment of their object . . ."

This ideal was to take practical shape in a "National Association of the United Kingdom for Promoting the Political and Social Improvement of the People." This Association was to work for the Charter, and it was also to subsidise missionaries, circulating libraries, tracts, public halls and schools—a vast programme with an Owenite ring about it. As for funds, Lovett suggested that if each signatory to the petition for the Charter gave a penny a week, this would bring in £256,000 a year, of which £240,000 could be used for the erection of 80 halls or schools at £3,000 each, and the rest be spent on the libraries, missionaries, tracts, &c.

Lovett had outlined this scheme with Collins' help in the thesis on "Chartism" that he wrote in jail and smuggled out to Place, with the request that it should be published on the day of his release. Place, thinking the scheme grandiose and impracticable, threw cold water on it, and hence publication was delayed—a delay that Lovett resented bitterly. After his release he and Collins published the book, following it up in March, 1841, with an address setting out the plan for the National Association. Many leading Chartists signed this address, but when the plan came under the ban of O'Connor, who attacked it with virulence in the *Northern Star*, some of the signatories withdrew their signature; the second edition of the book failed to sell, and by the time the National Association actually came into being, in October, 1841, the scheme was foredoomed to failure. O'Connor, as an ally, might have made success impossible, but as an enemy he made success equally impossible.

Working class support, such as it was, lay behind O'Connor and the National Charter Association, a body formed in July, 1841, in Manchester, to restart the agitation after its ignominious collapse. This body Lovett refused to join, though he disclaimed all hostility to it. Its illegal constitution was given as the reason for his refusal, and by the time the constitution had been amended his relations with O'Connor were too bitter to make co-operation between the two men possible.

Complete Suffrage Movement.

As his scheme fell flat, so far as working class support went, Lovett was driven more and more to the middle classes, and he took a prominent part in the attempt in 1842 to amalgamate the middle class and the working class movements for suffrage reform, known as the Complete Suffrage Union, and associated with the name of Joseph Sturge of Birmingham. Lovett, unlike O'Connor, was a Free Trader, but he thought the suffrage more important than the repeal of the Corn Laws, which were "only one of the effects of the great cause we are seeking to remove." Hence he resented the anti-Corn Law agitation as side-tracking enthusiasm for the Charter. Sturge, who belonged to the anti-Corn Law League, came to a similar conclusion, and in April, 1842, he organised a conference in Birmingham of middle-class democrats, including John Bright, drawn largely from the ranks of the anti-Corn Law League, together with working class representatives such as Lovett and Collins. To everyone's surprise, complete unanimity was reached on the Six Points, and the substance of the Charter was adopted, though its name was studiously avoided. Its name had now too many sinister associations for the middle class delegates to allow its use. Lovett pleaded hard for a motion that the actual Charter should be considered at a future meeting, but the question was shelved, the Conference agreeing to a resolution that "any documents which embody the necessary details" should be considered. Meanwhile, on Lovett's motion, the Complete Suffrage Union was formed.

The future looked promising enough for the new body. Local associations sprang up: a petition promoted by the Union was discussed in Parliament, and though it obtained only 67 votes as against 226, all the Radicals and Free Traders voted for it, including Cobden, and, of course, Bright. But, again, O'Connor's ban was on the project, and he threatened to swamp the coming Conference. To checkmate him, and to keep discussion off the tabooed subject of the Charter, the middle-class members of the Council resorted to what seemed to Lovett a piece of sharp practice. They drafted a new Bill, called the Bill of Rights, containing the Six Points, but avoiding the name of Charter, and this Bill they presented to the Conference as the basis of discussion. This rejection of the actual Charter, the symbol for which men had fought and suffered and died, roused Lovett's indignation, and drove him to make common cause with O'Connor. He proposed a motion, seconded by O'Connor, that the People's Charter should be discussed. It was carried by 193 to 94, but the middle classes thereupon withdrew from the Conference and co-operation was at an end. Lovett's lip was said to have "curled in scorn," whilst O'Connor poured flattery on his ally. It was the only occasion after the 1839 Convention on which the two men worked together, and their co-operation did not outlast the day.

Whilst Lovett was working for the Complete Suffrage project, the National Charter Association had occupied itself in promoting another monster petition to Parliament. This second petition, six miles in length, with over three million signatures, was presented in the House of Commons in May, 1842. The activities of its "physical force" members, which usually found scope only in breaking up meetings of the anti-Corn Law League and other societies, a policy abhorred by Lovett, were given a real opportunity in the summer of 1842, when a series of strikes spread through the North and the Midlands. It was a chance for the Chartists to dominate the situation. An attempt was made to call on the workers to remain on strike till the Charter was won, but not only was the response half-hearted, but the "physical force" Chartists themselves were in two minds about it; O'Connor disavowed the action, and the Government promptly packed away most of the leaders in prison. Lovett, during the strike, had issued a characteristic address urging the strikers to avoid violence.

One more effort was made to close up the ranks and produce co-operation between Lovett and O'Connor. When O'Connor diverted the Chartist agitation to his ill-fated land scheme, Lovett was asked, in 1843, to become its secretary. He refused, and published his letter of refusal, with its bitter indictment of O'Connor and of the mischief he had done. "Previous to his notorious career there was something pure and intellectual in our agitation. There was a reciprocity of generous sentiment, a tolerant spirit of investigation, an ardent aspiration for all that can improve and dignify humanity, which awakened the hopes of all good men, and which even our enemies respected. He came among us to blight those feelings, to wither those hopes. . . . . By his great professions, by trickery and deceit, he got the aid of the working classes to establish an organ to promulgate their principles, which he soon converted into an instrument for destroying everything intellectual and moral in our movement."

Lovett made a last effort in 1845 to induce the Chartists to change their ways, and to eschew "violence and folly." "Be assured," he wrote, "that those who flatter your prejudices, commend your ignorance, and administer to your vices, are not your friends. 'Unwashed faces, unshorn chins' and dirty habits will in nowise prepare you for political or social equality with the decent portion of your brethren. . . . . Empty boastings, abusive language and contempt for all mental and moral qualifications will rather retard than promote your freedom." Using his favourite phrase about a combination of "the wise and good," he urged them once more "to rise into vitality and strength." But his appeal fell on deaf ears. After the failure of the Complete Suffrage agitation, Lovett had, in fact, become a publicist and not a politician. He continued to compose addresses, including appeals to the working classes of France and America against war, and could organise a successful

meeting of protest in 1844 against the reception in England of that "active, scheming, wily tyrant," Nicholas of Russia, but he had no following, and the societies he tried to found, such as "The General Association of Progress" and the "People's League" were failures. After 1846 he became for a time publisher of *Howitt's Journal*, which he used as a vehicle for fresh manifestoes.

Later Life.

Henceforth his main work in life was as an educationalist, fostering those "mental and moral qualifications" which he felt to be the basis of all improvement. The National Association, though it failed to fulfil the dreams of the writer of "Chartism," and sometimes seemed to exist only to afford him a platform from which to address the public, had managed in 1842 to open one, though only one, of the proposed National Halls. The hall was in Holborn, where a music hall now stands. It started in debt, and it remained in debt, and much of a testimonial of £140 given to Lovett by friends in 1848 went in payments connected with it; but, though a constant source of pecuniary worry, it gave opportunities for educational experiments; a Sunday school was opened there in 1843, at which Lovett taught; and in 1848 a regular day school was started under Lovett's superintendence. Later on, in 1851, he began to do most of the teaching himself.

It cannot be said that he was a disappointed man. Few men who have led movements have cared less for leadership. His denunciations of the evils done by relying on leaders were sincere. He neither possessed nor desired the gift of swaying multitudes. That one man should influence others, except by helping them to use their own reason, seemed to him a vicious thing. The work of education was congenial to him—his whole life had been an attempt to help the working classes to educate themselves—and he threw himself with as much zest into writing elementary school books on anatomy and physiology as he had shown for his studies in his early twenties. At the age of sixty-four he was engaged on a text book about vertebrated animals, but found the subject so important that he "determined to treat of the invertebrated animals also." Nor can a man be called disillusioned who, after Lovett's experiences, could at the age of fifty-six seriously send a petition to the House of Commons, urging the need for a higher intellectual and moral standard for members of Parliament, to be obtained by a compulsory examination for all candidates, or could advocate that the clergy should be turned into an instrument of progress by inducing them to teach elementary astronomy on Sundays. But he was a sad man, as, indeed, he had always been, and it was a sombre old age. The closing of the National Hall, and, in consequence, of his school in 1857, was a heavy blow. He taught elementary science at other schools afterwards, and continued writing text books, which some-

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times found and sometimes did not find a publisher, but he could not support himself, and was forced to accept help from a generous friend. "Such kindness, indeed," he wrote, "has been rarely witnessed towards a stranger as that which I have received from my noble-hearted friend. Bnt while I know that all this kindness is extended towards me freely and ungrudgingly, it does, however, jar upon my feelings to think that, after all my struggles, all my industry, and, I may add all my temperance and frugality, I cannot earn or live upon my own bread in my old age."

As an old man he lived with his devoted wife and his granddaughter, the only child of his daughter, and wrote his "Life and Struggles," a book in which he strung together the addresses and manifestoes of his earlier days, adding long comments on later events. He died on August 8th, 1877, aged seventy-seven, and was buried at Highgate.

THE FABIAN SOCIETY

25 TOTHILL STREET, WESTMINSTER, LONDON, S.W.1.

Those willing to join the Labour Party, or desirous of obtaining information about its Programme and Principles, are invited to communicate with the Secretary of the Fabian Society.

The Fabian Society has been, from the outset, a constituent body of the Labour Party; and membership of the Society carries with it full membership of the Labour Party; eligibility for nomination to all Conferences and Offices, and qualification for Labour Party, candidatures for Parliament and Local Authorities, without obligation to belong to any other organisation.

The Society welcomes as members any persons, men or women, wherever resident, who subscribe to its Basis (set forth below), and who will co-operate in its work according to their opportunities.

BASIS OF THE FABIAN SOCIETY.

(TO BE SIGNED BY ALL MEMBERS.)

(*Adopted May 23rd*, 1919.)

The Fabian Society consists of Socialists.

It therefore aims at the reorganisation of Society by the emancipation of Land and Industrial Capital from individual ownership, and the vesting of them in the community for the general benefit. In this way only can the natural and acquired advantages of the country be equitably shared by the whole people.

The Society accordingly works for the extinction of private property in land, with equitable consideration of established expectations, and due provision as to the tenure of the home and the homestead; for the transfer to the community, by constitutional methods, of all such industries as can be conducted socially; and for the establishment, as the governing consideration in the regulation of production, distribution and service, of the common good instead of private profit.

The Society is a constituent of the Labour Party and of the International Socialist Congress; but it takes part freely in all constitutional movements, social, economic and political, which can be guided towards its own objects. Its direct business is (*a*) the propaganda of Socialism in its application to current problems; (*b*) investigation and discovery in social, industrial, political and economic relations; (*c*) the working out of Socialist principles in legislation and administrative reconstruction; (*d*) the publication of the results of its investigations and their practical lessons.

The Society, believing in equal citizenship of men and women in the fullest sense, is open to persons irrespective of sex, race or creed, who commit themselves to its aims and purposes as stated above, and undertake to promote its work.

The Society includes:—

I. Members, who must sign the Basis and be elected by the Committee. Their Subscriptions are not fixed; each is expected to subscribe annually according to his means. They control the Society through the Executive Committee (elected annually by ballot through a postal vote), and at its annual and other business meetings.

II. Associates, who sign a form expressing only general sympathy with the objects of the Society and pay not less than 10s. a year. They can attend all except the exclusively members' meetings, but have no control over the Society and its policy.

III. Subscribers, who must pay at least 5s. a year, and who can attend the Society's Ordinary Lectures.

The monthly paper, *Fabian News*, and the Tracts from time to time published in the well-known Fabian Series, are posted to all these classes. There are convenient Common Rooms, where light refreshments can be obtained, with an extensive library for the free use of members only.

Among the Society's activities (in which it places its services unreservedly at the disposal of the Labour Party and the Local Labour Parties all over the country, the Trade Unions and Trades Councils, and all other Labour and Socialist organisations), may be mentioned:

(i.) Free lectures by its members and officers;
(ii.) The well-known Fabian Book-boxes, each containing about three dozen of the best books on Economics, Politics and Social Problems, which can be obtained by any organisation of men or women for 15s. per annum, covering an exchange of books every three months;
(iii.) Answers to Questions from Members of Local Authorities and others on legal, technical or political matters of Local Government, etc.;
(iv.) Special subscription courses of lectures on new developments in thought;
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times found and sometimes did not find a publisher, but he could not support himself, and was forced to accept help from a generous friend. "Such kindness, indeed," he wrote, "has been rarely witnessed towards a stranger as that which I have received from my noble-hearted friend. But while I know that all this kindness is extended towards me freely and ungrudgingly, it does, however, jar upon my feelings to think that, after all my struggles, all my industry, and, I may add all my temperance and frugality, I cannot earn or live upon my own bread in my old age."

As an old man he lived with his devoted wife and his grand-daughter, the only child of his daughter, and wrote his "Life and Struggles," a book in which he strung together the addresses and manifestoes of his earlier days, adding long comments on later events. He died on August 8th, 1877, aged seventy-seven, and was buried at Highgate.

THE FABIAN SOCIETY

25 TOTHILL STREET, WESTMINSTER, LONDON, S.W.1.

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The Fabian Society has been, from the outset, a constituent body of the Labour Party; and membership of the Society carries with it full membership of the Labour Party; eligibility for nomination to all Conferences and Offices, and qualification for Labour Party, candidatures for Parliament and Local Authorities, without obligation to belong to any other organisation.

The Society welcomes as members any persons, men or women, wherever resident, who subscribe to its Basis (set forth below), and who will co-operate in its work according to their opportunities.

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(TO BE SIGNED BY ALL MEMBERS.)

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Printed by G. Standring, 7 Finsbury St., London, E.C. and published by the Fabian Society. 25 Tothill Street, Westminster, London S.W.

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